

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 and 16-26 are pending. By this Amendment, the Title and claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9, 16, 17 and 21 are amended, and claims 10-15 are canceled. The claims are amended to even more clearly distinguish over the applied references.

The amendments to the claims are supported by the original specification. For example, substrate table 19 is a first portion of a movable stage PST and has a support surface that supports an object P. In addition, moving table 22 is a second portion of the movable stage PST. Furthermore, Z- θ movement mechanism 20 is located between the substrate table 19 and the moving table 22, and moves the substrate table 19 in Z and θ directions. See, for example, Fig. 1 and the paragraph bridging pages 11 and 12 of the substitute specification that was filed on September 26, 2000. Accordingly, no new matter is added by the above amendments.

The Office Action objected to the title. Applicants submit that the amended title overcomes this objection. Withdrawal of the objection to the title is requested.

Claims 1, 2, 5-8, 11-18 and 21-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP-A-8-293459 (Tokunaga). This rejection is moot with respect to canceled claims 11-15, and is respectfully traversed with respect to the remaining claims.

Tokunaga does not disclose or suggest the combination of features recited in independent claims 1, 5 and 16 including, *inter alia*, a second drive mechanism located between first and second portions of a movable stage and that moves the first portion in a direction that crosses the support surface of the first portion, which supports an object, along with the claimed first drive mechanism and first and second position detectors, which respectively detect positions of the first and second portions. While the Office Action asserts that elements 24 and 22 of Tokunaga correspond to the claimed first and second portions of a movable stage, Tokunaga does not disclose or suggest any drive mechanism located between

elements 22 and 24, and which drives portion 24 in a direction that crosses the support surface of the first portion. Accordingly, Tokunaga does not anticipate independent claims 1, 5 and 16 or their dependent claims.

With respect to the previously-claimed feature of a second drive mechanism (recited in claims 9, 10, 25 and 26), the Office Action took "Official Notice that drive mechanisms which drives [sic] the object along an axis direction of the projection system (are/is) old and well known in the art." See item 8 on page 4 of the Office Action. Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed combination of features as recited in independent claims 1, 5 and 16 is not suggested in the art. If the Examiner intends to assert that it would have been obvious to modify Tokunaga to include the claimed second drive mechanism at the claimed location, the Examiner is requested to identify and rely upon a reference showing that feature, including the claimed location of the second drive mechanism.

With respect to independent claims 17 and 21, Tokunaga does not disclose or suggest the claimed combination of steps including, *inter alia*, moving the first portion in a second direction that crosses the support surface, as well as detecting positions of the first and second portions. Accordingly, Tokunaga does not anticipate independent claims 17 and 21, or their dependent claims. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is requested.

Furthermore, if the Examiner believes that it would have been obvious to modify the method taught by Tokunaga in order to move the claimed first portion in a second direction that crosses the support surface, the Examiner is requested to identify and rely upon a reference that suggests such a claimed modification. Applicants respectfully submit that reliance upon "Official Notice" overlooks the claimed combinations of features of the claimed method and apparatus.

Claims 3 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,057,921 to Yao. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

First, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is improper because claims 3 and 19 respectively depend from claims 1 and 17. Thus, it appears that the Office Action is failing to consider the features of claims 1 and 17, which are included in claims 3 and 19, respectively. The Office Action cannot reject claims 3 and 19 based upon Yao alone.

Second, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 3 and 19 are patentable for at least all of the reasons set forth above with respect to their corresponding independent claims 1 and 17.

Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is requested.

Claims 4 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Tokunaga in view of Yao. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Yao does not provide the deficiencies in Tokunaga noted above with respect to independent claims 1 and 17, from which claims 4 and 20 depend. Accordingly, claims 4 and 20 are patentable for at least all of the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 1 and 17. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is requested.

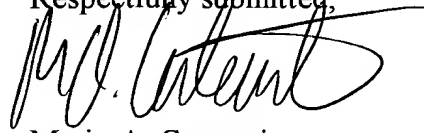
Claims 9, 10, 25 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Tokunaga and further in view of "Official Notice". This rejection is moot with respect to claim 10, and respectfully traversed with respect to the remaining claims.

As discussed above with respect to the independent claims, reliance upon "Official Notice" overlooks the combination of features recited in the claims. In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 9, 25 and 26 are patentable for at least all of the reasons set forth above with respect to their corresponding independent claims. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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MAC/ccs

Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

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